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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/628,190	07/28/2000	Yasuhide Matsumoto	1405.1023/JDH	2686

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EXAMINER	
JACOBS, LASHONDA T	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2157	7

DATE MAILED: 12/30/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/628,190	MATSUMOTO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	LaShonda T. Jacobs	2157	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *30 October 2003*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-12* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-12* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

13)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

14)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

This Office Action is in response to Applicants' Amendment and Request for Reconsideration filed on October 30, 2003. Claims 1-10 are presented for further examination. Claims 11 and 12 newly added by Applicant's are also presented for further examination.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims **1-12** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Bunney et al (hereinafter, "Bunney", 6,212,548).

As per claim **1**, Bunney discloses a profile creation method for use in a conversation system having a plurality of terminal devices that can exchange messages among each other, the plurality of terminal devices being connected to a network and sharing one of a plurality of virtual conversation spaces formed on the network, said method comprising steps of:

- providing predetermined keywords and predetermined categories such that the keywords and categories are correlated to each other (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7);

- identifying a category that corresponds to a keyword if the message exchanged within the virtual space contains the keyword (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7); and
- storing the identified category such that the category is correlated to a user (figures 3 and 4, col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7).

As per claim **2**, Bunney discloses a profile creation system for use in a conversation system having a plurality of terminal devices that can exchange messages among each other, the plurality of terminal devices being connected to a network and sharing one of a plurality of virtual conversation spaces formed on the network, said profile creation system comprising:

- a category table in which predetermined keywords and predetermined categories are stored such that the keywords and categories are correlated to each other (figures 3 and 4, col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7);
- a user table that stores users, predetermined keywords sent by the user, and the categories, such that the users, keywords, and categories are correlated to one another (figures 3 and 4, col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7); and
- administration means for obtaining from the conversation system a message to be sent to the conversation space, determining based on said category table a category that corresponds to the keyword if the message contains a keyword, and writing in said user table the keyword sender, the keyword, and the determined category (figures 3 and 4,

col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 7, lines 28-33, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7).

As per claim **3**, Bunney discloses the profile creation system as set forth in claim 2,

- wherein said user table stores valid period and time at which the keyword was sent, in addition to the users, the keywords, and the categories (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7);
- said administration means further obtains from the conversation system the time at which the message containing the keyword was sent (col. 5, lines 40-54, col. 15, lines 1-36, and col. 16, lines 25-37); and
- said administration means writing in said user table the time of the message and the valid period of the message, in addition to the keyword sender, the keyword and the category, and deleting an entry whose valid period since the time of message has expired (figures 3 and 4, col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 7, lines 28-33, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7).

As per claim **4**, Bunney discloses the profile creation system as set forth in claim 2,

- wherein said user table stores the users, the keywords, the categories and message senders whose messages are related to the keywords (figures 3 and 4, col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 7, lines 28-33, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7); and
- said administration means creates a conversation log in the conversation space, obtains from the conversation log and the conversation system the senders of messages that were sent before and/or after the message containing the keyword was sent, and writes

in said user table the senders as related users, such that the related users are correlated with the keywords (figures 3 and 4, col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 7, lines 28-33, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7).

As per claim **5**, Bunney discloses the profile creation system as set forth in claim 2,

- wherein said user table stores the users, the keywords, the categories and rating data that indicates harmfulness for each user (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7); and
- said administration means updates the rating data of a user when a predetermined harmful keyword is sent (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7).

As per claim **6**, Bunney discloses the profile creation system as set forth in claim 2,

- wherein the conversation system processes messages exchanged by the conversation devices based on users' categories stored in said user table (figures 3 and 4, col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 7, lines 28-33, col. 7, lines 28-58, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 1-20, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7).

As per claim **7**, Bunney discloses a computer-readable recording media having a profile creation program for use in a conversation system having a plurality of terminal devices that can exchange messages among each other, the plurality of terminal devices being connected to a network and sharing one of a plurality of virtual conversation spaces formed on the network, said profile creation program executing steps of:

A: storing predetermined keywords and predetermined categories such that the keywords and categories are correlated to each other (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7);

B: obtaining from the conversation system a message to be sent to the conversation space (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7);

C: determining based on the category table a category that corresponds to the keyword if the message contains a (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7); and

D: storing the sender of the keyword, the keyword, and the determined category, such that the sender, keyword, and category are correlated to one another (figures 3 and 4, col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7).

As per claim **8**, Bunney discloses a profile creation method for use in a conversation system having a plurality of terminal devices that can exchange messages among each other, the plurality of terminal devices being connected to a network and sharing one of a plurality of virtual conversation spaces formed on the network, said method utilizing a category table that can be referred to via the network, predetermined keywords and predetermined categories being correlated to each other in the category table, said method comprising steps of:

- identifying based on the category table a category that corresponds to the keyword if the message exchanged within the virtual space contains a keyword (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7); and

- storing the identified category such that the category is correlated to a user (figures 3 and 4, col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7).

As per claim **9**, Bunney discloses a profile creation system for use in a conversation system having a plurality of terminal devices that can exchange messages among each other, the plurality of terminal devices being connected to a network and sharing one of a plurality of virtual conversation spaces formed on the network, said profile creation system utilizing a category table that can be referred to via the network, predetermined keywords and predetermined categories being correlated to each other in the category table, said profile creation system comprising:

- a user table storing users, predetermined keywords spoken by the user, and the categories, such that the users, keywords, and the categories are correlated to one another (figures 3 and 4, col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7); and
- administration means for obtaining from the conversation system a message to be sent to the conversation space, determining based on the category table whether or not the message contains a keyword, determining based on the category table a category that corresponds to the keyword if the message contains a keyword, and writing in said user table the keyword sender, the keyword, and the determined category (figures 3 and 4, col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 7, lines 28-33, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7).

As per claim **10**, Bunney discloses a computer-readable recording media having a profile creation program for use in a conversation system having a plurality of terminal devices that can exchange messages among each other, the plurality of terminal devices being connected to a network and sharing one of a plurality of virtual conversation spaces formed on the network, said profile creation program utilizing a category table that can be referenced via the network, predetermined keywords and predetermined categories being correlated to each other in the category table, said profile creation program executing steps of:

A: obtaining from the conversation system a message tobe sent to the conversation space (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7);

B: determining based on the category table whether or not the message contains a keyword (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7);

C: determining based on the category table a category that corresponds to the keyword if the message contains a keyword (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7); and

D: storing the sender of the keyword, the keyword, and the determined category, such that the sender, the keyword, and the category are correlated to one another (figures 3 and 4, col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7).

As per claims **11** and **12**, Bunney discloses a method and a computer network conversation system, comprising:

- correlating predetermined keywords with predetermined personal interest and characteristics categories (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7);
- managing a personal interest and characteristics category of a user according to a keyword in a message transmitted by the user within a virtual conversation space formed on a computer network, based upon the correlating (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7); and

providing message-attribute –based-virtual space services to users in the virtual conversation space according to the managed personal interest and characteristic category of the user (col. 3, lines 29-31, col. 9, lines 35-56, col. 10, lines 39-67, col. 11, lines 1-24, lines 63-67 and col. 12, lines 1-7).

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-12 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

The Office notes the following arguments:

a. DeSimone descriptions referred to by the Examiner relate to controlling chat participation using authorization information, such as using the originator ID and the conversation ID, a password or keyword included in a char message (see, col. 15, lines 5-12). Although DeSimone discloses that in some cases a password or other keywords may be added in message dialogues, the password or other keywords are used as fixed authorization information in message to control access to a chat room. In contrast, in the present invention a message keyword is used to

categorize the message containing the keyword and correlate the category to the user that transmitted the message.

b. It appears that the Examiner deems the present invention's claimed category to be same as conversation ID. However, such overly broad interpretation of the present claims is not appropriate, because clearly a category differs than a conversation ID.

c. The specification of the present application clearly describes that a category is a classification, such as hobby, that is correlated with keyword, which is a classification of the keyword that can be attributed to the user (i.e., the user is classified as enjoying hobbies). Therefore, the present invention's claimed category differs from than DeSimone's conversation identifier only identifies a chat room (a conversation) and does not classify (categorize) a message that can be attributed to a sender of the message as in the claimed invention. In DeSimone, a conversation identifier only indicates that a user is participating in the particular chat room or conversation (co. 3, lines 43047 and col. 5, lines 40-54). Therefore, DeSimone does not disclose "keywords and categories are correlated" and "the category is correlated to a user" based upon the keywords in messages transmitted by the user (i.e., "if the message exchanged within the virtual space contains the keyword").

d. It is clear that DeSimone does not disclose or suggest the recitation, "managing a personal interest and characteristic category of a user according to keyword in a message transmitted by the user within a virtual conversation space formed on a computer network, based upon the correlating."

In considering (a)-(d), Applicant's arguments have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,793,365 to Tang et al

U.S. Pat. No. 5,796,393 to MacNaughton et al

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LaShonda T. Jacobs whose telephone number is 703-305-7494. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ario Etienne can be reached on 703-308-7562. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-746-7239 for regular communications and 703-746-7238 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

LaShonda T. Jacobs
Examiner
Art Unit 2157

ltj
December 19, 2003

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